

Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP)

Steering Committee (SC) Meeting

October 3 2008, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
California Farm Bureau Federation Conference Room
2300 River Plaza Ave, Sacramento, CA

Draft Meeting Notes

Associated documents/handouts:

- Agenda
- Draft BDCP Steering Committee Notes July 25, 2008
- Draft BDCP Steering Committee Notes August 8, 2008
- Biological Goals and Objectives: Hierarchical Relationships
- Goal and Objectives Pyramid Examples for Selected Species and Viability Attributes

Action Items and Key Decisions

- Approved Draft BDCP Steering Committee Notes July 25, 2008
- Approved Draft BDCP Steering Committee Notes August 8, 2008

Updates

- Wave Public Access TV from Woodland is in attendance to video tape the meeting at the request of North Delta Cares
- Update on the EIR/EIS process from DWR. Comments from the Scoping meetings are being compiled. The first draft will be produced in about a year.
- An update on SC tours and field trips. There has been no progress yet on organizing another all day tour of the Delta. The Sacramento County Regional Sanitation District has offered a tour of their plant along with a tour of the Bufferlands (the open space surrounding the wastewater treatment facility). Several SC members indicated a desire to participate.
- USFWS signed letters with the EPA and USACE to become cooperating agencies for BDCP.

Biological Goals and Objectives Working Group

Jason Peltier (co-chair) reporting on the October 1 meeting. The WG addressed the original understanding of the goals and objectives. After discussing different opinions about the perceptions for goals and objectives, the WG agreed to good framework.

Will Stelle presented an overview of HO # 1 Hierarchical Relationships (see associated HO and docs)—this diagram frames the relationship of BDCP goals and objectives to monitoring and adaptive management decision making over the term of the BDCP and to overarching regional species conservation objectives (e.g., recovery plans). The diagram presents the relationships as a pyramid, with the following successive tiers:

- Overall conservation goals for species
- Attributes of viability
- BDCP biological goals and objectives
- Conservation measures
- Adaptive management and monitoring indicators and metrics

SC members discussed the content of the diagram and sought clarification of the meaning of terms such as conveyance, grow and survival rates, origination of the diagram and role of recovery plans.

Pete Rawlings presented an overview of HO # 2 Goal and Objectives Pyramid Examples for Selected Species and Viability Attributes (see associated HO and docs). This document describes how goals and objectives will be prepared for the BDCP and provides hypothetical goals and objectives as examples of what might be proposed for the BDCP.

SC members engaged in a discussion following the presentation of the document. They discussed at length concerns regarding different levels of commitments that may be involved relating to the implementation of conservation measures. In addition, they discussed the hierarchy of the examples, the adaptive management process, and the role of the Governance WG in that process.

Conveyance Working Group

Jerry Johns (co-chair) reported that the WG has recognized the necessity of beginning to focus attention on the relationship between conveyance and habitat.

Presentation on Hydrodynamic Effects of Delta-wide Tidal Marsh Restoration

Paul Cylinder and Armin Munevar (by phone) presented an initial evaluation of hydrodynamic effects of tidal marsh restoration in the Delta.

A summary of the presentation included:

- Evaluation goals
- Restoration Opportunity Areas (ROAs)
- North Delta tidal marsh assumptions
- Key points
- Changes to the salinity regime

SC members discussed issues raised in the presentation, including the changing complexities in the Delta, how modeling results for restored marsh might be affected if modeling were to assume marshes were vegetated rather than being treated as reservoirs, concerns about water quality in the south Delta, assumptions regarding existing conditions, and the preliminary nature of presented results.

In addition, there were questions from the public regarding water levels, residence time, stagnation, and the statistics used in the presentation regarding salinity levels.

Additional discussions followed regarding the next steps needed for conveyance and habitat restoration tasks. These included preparation of more detailed models, focus on operational scenarios, use of Cal-Lite Interactive Sessions (formerly called “gaming”), process for integrating conveyance and habitat restoration, fluctuating salinity, value of flows (especially in relationship to habitat restoration), water supply goals, and a broader range of alternatives for conveyance. A request was made that the Fish Agencies ensure participation of their experts as this process continues. Fish Agencies are preparing specific inputs for the Cal-Lite Interactive Session planned for next week.

Working Groups, Technical Teams, and Liaisons

Public Outreach Liaisons

Karla Nemeth (co-chair) reported on the trip planned for next week to Washington, DC. They are planning on two briefings with members of Congress. Additional briefings are also planned with FWS, EPA, and NOAA.

The BDCP Calendar is now available on the website. Secretary Chrisman continues to hold monthly meeting with elected officials from County governments. There are plans to add meetings with cities officials as well.

Membership Working Group

Ann Hayden (co-chair) reporting that the WG is gathering additional information from applicants. The WG is anticipating bringing recommendations to the next SC meeting.

Science Liaisons

Wayne Spencer reported on the independent science workshop for non-aquatic species. He indicated there good attendance and a good overview from the consultants. The group of advisors reviewed the proposed covered species list, species accounts prepared by SAIC, maps, discussed principles for conservation and restoration. They generally agreed with the process of selecting species for coverage, and indentified additional information that could be addressed. They will also recommend of the addition of certain species to the proposed list, and the removal of others. The science advisors will submit a report to the SC by the end of October.

Kim Delfino (co-chair) reporting the Science Liaisons will reconvene to plan the adaptive management workshop scheduled for November.

Other Stressors Working Group

Brent Walthall (co-chairs) reporting that the consultant is updating the Other Stressors' conservation measures document, with the next version available at the October 17 SC meeting.

Implementing Structure/Governance Working Group

Richard Roos-Collins (co-chair) reporting. The WG had a good presentation from agencies at last meeting about how governance of water operation currently works. The WG co-chairs have been meeting with John Kirlin from DV to discuss governance issues. The WG will be discussing governance "principles" at today's meeting.

Habitat Restoration Technical Team

Pete Rawlings reporting there will be a Habitat TT meeting next week on October 8. Comments are due today on the Habitat TT conservation measures presented at the last SC meeting. The next task is to identify criteria and the steps necessary to identify restoration acreage objectives.

Public Comment

Terry Mitchell from the Sacramento County Regional Sanitation District requested that BDCP information be posted online for review.

Mark Pruner from North Delta CARES recommends tent cards at table with SC member names.

Attendees

Management and Representatives

Karen Scarborough (Chair, The Resources Agency)
Marc Ebbin (The Resources Agency/DWR)
Will Stelle (The Resources Agency)
Laura King Moon (State Water Contractors)
Jerry Johns (DWR)
Sue Fry (USBR)
Brent Walthall (Kern County Water District)
Dan Nelson (SLDMWD)
Greg Zlotnick (Santa Clara Valley Water District)
Jason Peltier (Westlands)
Karla Nemeth (Zone 7)
Richard Roos-Collins (American Rivers/Natural Heritage Institute)
Kim Delfino (Defenders of Wildlife)
Ann Hayden (Environmental Defense Fund)
John Cain (Natural Heritage Institute)
Anthony Saracino (The Nature Conservancy)
Campbell Ingram (The Nature Conservancy)
Chris Scheuring (California Farm Bureau Federation)
John McCamman (DFG)
Carl Wilcox (DFG)
John Engbring (USFWS)
Paul Cylinder (SAIC)
Pete Rawlings (SAIC)

On phone

Tom Howard (SWRCB)
Ron Kino (Mirant)
Steve Rothert (American Rivers)
Melanie Rowland (NMFS)
Greg Gartrell (CCWD)
Gary Bobker (The Bay Institute)
Ara Azhderian (SLDMWA)

Other attendees

See sign-in sheets